tax evasion in these areas. Further, Government is taking all necessary measures under the Central Excise Act, 1944 and the rules made thereunder. The marble consignments are being examined on first check basis so that the actual quantity can be measured and evaluated with regard to classification and exemption notification to plug any possible evasion of duty. Stiff fines and penalties are also imposed on mis-declaration to discourage evasion.

Deactivation of PAN cards

3207. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that over a million Permanent Account Numbers of the estimated 43 million issued may soon be deactivated on account of the revelation that individuals have received more than one number;

(b) whether Government officials have identified the dpulicate PAN cards issued; and

(c) if so, the action proposed thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) The Income-tax Department has decided to de-activate the duplicate PANs held by persons.

(b) The Department has identified the likely duplicate PANs through an automated process.

(c) The likely duplicate PANs have been communicated to the jurisdictional Assessing Officers who have been asked to ascertain from the persons holding such PAN. Subsequently, on confirmation, the duplicate PANs will be de-activated and data linked to the main PAN.

Circulation of black money

3208. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any report from any circle, about the amount of black money on circulation in Indian markets at present;

(b) if so, the amount of black money at present in markets;

(c) whether there are possibilities that a part of the black money is turning into white to add to the Income Tax and getting invested into welfare services;

(d) if so, whether any assessment has been made to this effect;

(e) the results in the process achieved so far; and

(f) whether effective measures have not been taken to control black money; if so, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) and (b) There is no formal estimate of the amount of black money presently in circulation in the Country. However, at the instance of the Government, the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP) had'attempted an estimate of black money in circulation in the country. According to the report of the NIPFP, 'Aspects of Black Money in India (1985), the total amount of black money in the country during financial year 1983-84 was estimated between Rs. 31,584 crores and Rs. 36,786 crores.

(c) to (e) Durfng the course of enquiry and investigation carried out by the Income Tax Department, instances do come to the notice where attempt is made to evade tax by converting black money into white. Wherever such instances are detected appropriate action under the Income Tax Act, 1961 is taken to tax the income sought to be evaded and penalize the offender.

(f) There are several underlying causes of black money generation, including various socio-economic factors some of which are exogenous to the direct tax laws for combating tax evasion. However, the Income Tax Department takes several punitive and deterrent steps to control black money generation and to combat tax evasion including, scrutiny of returns, surveys, search and seizure action, imposition of penalty and launching of prosecution in appropriate cases. Checking tax evasion is an on-going activity of the Department.

Vacancies of non-official directors of banks

3209. DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of vacancies of non-official directors in the Public Sector Banks as on 1st January, 2006, bank-wise and category-wise; and